

## U.S. Acts on Bolivia Report

Post 9/3/71

The U.S. Air Force major who was the only American official in Santa Cruz when the successful rebellion against the Bolivian regime of Gen. Juan Jose Torres began there has been called to La Paz to report to the U.S. Ambassador.

State Department officials said that Maj. Robert J. Lundin, the adviser to the Bolivian air training school in Santa Cruz, was called to La Paz following reports that he had allowed the rebels to use his radio system to contact the capital 300 miles away.

The State Department officials deny that Lundin ever permitted the rebels under the leadership of Col. Hugo Banzer, to use the radio. They say that the plotters did not ask to use it. In fact, they add, the radio was used during the early stages of the rebellion by Bolivian military officers

loyal to Torres, and that it is common practice in Bolivia to allow government officials to use any private radio system.

Several cables from the embassy in La Paz reaffirm an earlier denial that Lundin had had any contact with Banzer, State Department officials said yesterday.

U.S. officials claim that the fact that Lundin had his own radio communications system was not at all extraordinary. They say that because the communications system in Bolivia is very primitive the country is full of Ham radio operators and that mining companies and road services all have their own systems. As the only American official in Santa Cruz, they say, Lundin needed a radio in order to have contact with La Paz.

During the course of the rebellion, they said, Washington was unable to contact La Paz but did reach Lundin in Santa Cruz. Officials said Lundin appeared to have a clear grasp of the political situation there.

U.S. officials concede that the military, which was at first loyal to Torres, then joined forces with Banzer. They note that leftists have repeatedly charged—without

producing any evidence—U.S. complicity in coups in the country.